

**REMARKS**

Claims 1, 6-12 and 17-22 are pending in the application.

Claims 5 and 16 are canceled. Claims 2-4 and 13-15 are withdrawn from consideration.

Claims 6-10 and 17-21 are allowed.

Claims 1, 11, 12 and 22 are rejected.

Claims 1 and 12 are amended herein to clarify applicant's claimed invention.

**REJECTION OF CLAIMS 1 AND 12 UNDER 35 U.S.C. §112**

Claims 1 and 12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph. In response, these claims are amended to clarify the patentable subject matter and to comply with the written description requirement.

**REJECTION OF CLAIMS 1 AND 11 UNDER 35 U.S.C. §102**

Claims 1 and 11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 6,408,001 (Chuah). Applicant respectfully traverses the rejections for at least the following reasons.

In applicant's claim 1, the explicit routing method in a label switching system includes, for example, a step of logically dividing a label switching router (LSR) (10 in FIG. 8) into a plurality of LSRs (LSR 1 – LSR 4) each having a label switching function; and a step of specifying only, when setting a label switched path (LSP) on the basis of an explicit route specified, a port or a port group of an egress node (LSR 3 or LSR 4) that corresponds to the LSR (LSR 3 or LSR 4) terminating the LSP within the plurality of logically divided LSRs.

The newly cited reference, Chuah describes, as a common label switching path segment, setting a label switched path on the basis of an explicit route specified in an MPLS network (400 in FIG. 4).

However in contrast to applicant's claimed invention Chuah does not disclose or suggest the features in the first and second steps of claim 1. Specifically, in Chuah, Label Switch Routers (LSRs 402 in FIGS. 4 and 5) are not logically divided into a plurality of LSRs.

**REJECTION OF CLAIMS 12 AND 22 UNDER 35 U.S.C. §103**

Claims 12 and 22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being unpatentable over Chuah. Applicant respectfully traverses the rejections for at least the following reasons.

Applicant's claim 11 describes an explicit routing method in a label switching system including specifying an MPLS explicit route by adding, to an MPLS-to-IP forwarding function of a port group in one specified egress node, a communication function with the MPLS-to-IP forwarding function of a port group in an intra-system other egress node, and a forwarding function to the port group in the intra-system other egress node.

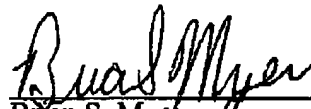
In Chuah, a label edge router LSR1 (402 in FIGS. 4 and 5) has no MPLS-to-IP forwarding function, the communication function, and the forwarding function. The features are recited in Applicant's claim 11 but reference does not disclose or suggest these claimed features.

It is respectfully submitted that a packet router of claim 22 has "a module for specifying ..." as distinguishable feature from Chuah.

An earnest effort has been made to be fully responsive to the Examiner's rejections. In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is believed that the present application is in condition for allowance. Passage of this application to allowance is earnestly solicited. However, if for any reason the Examiner should consider this application not to be in condition for allowance, he is respectfully requested to telephone the undersigned attorney at the number listed below prior to issuing a further Action.

Any fee due with this paper may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-1290.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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